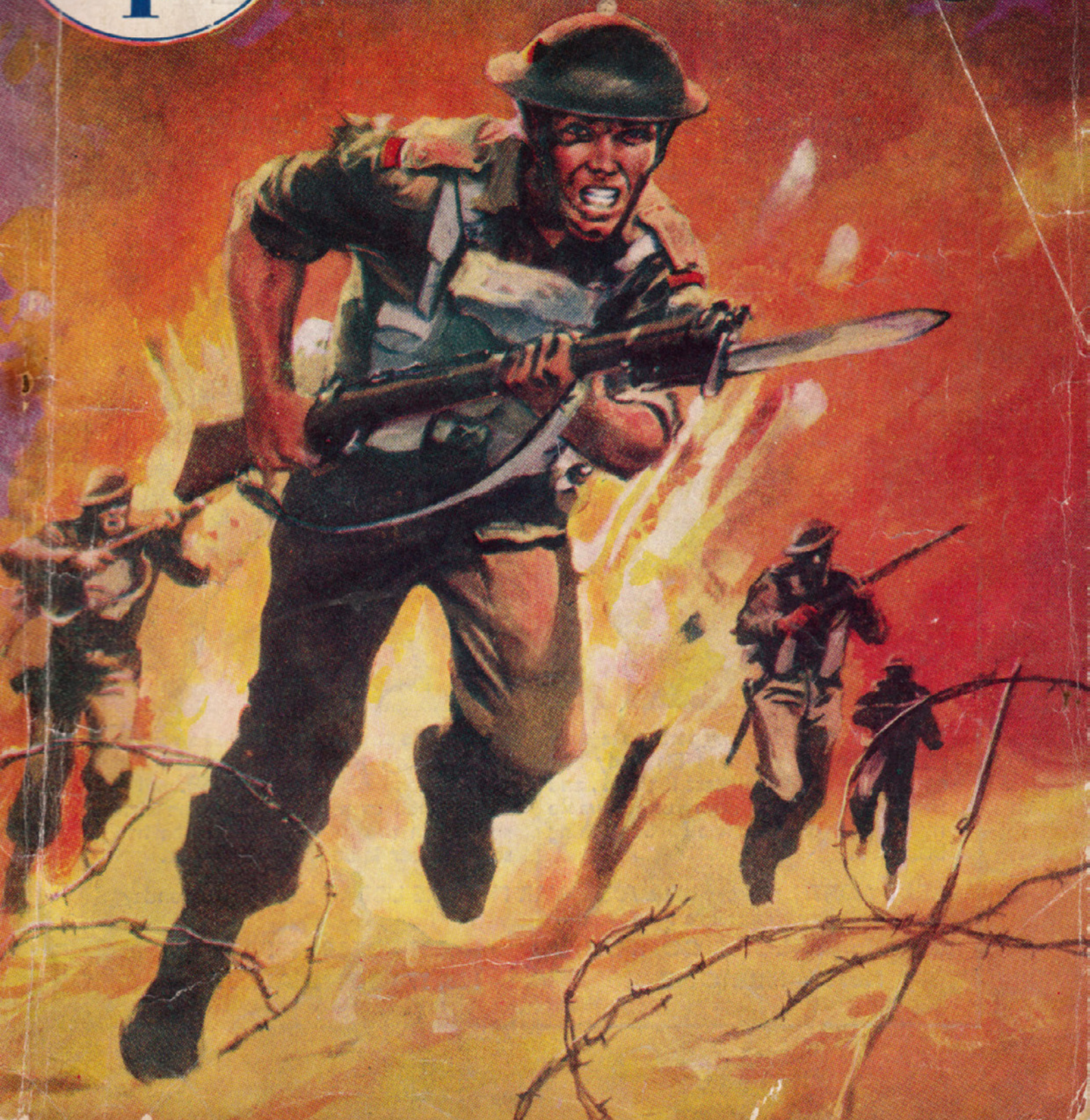


FIX BAYONETS



ALSO ON SALE NOW

FOR WAR THRILLS ... ACTION ... DRAMA ...

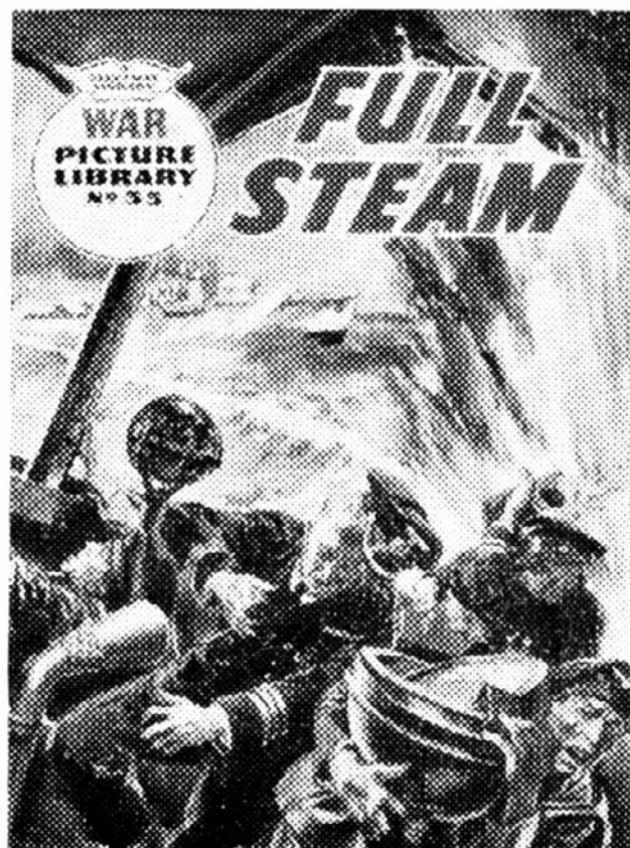
WAR PICTURE LIBRARY

No. 33—UNDER FIRE

No. 35—FULL STEAM



Who can say what happens to a man who has already forced his body and courage beyond their last limits... and then lives through an unbelievable nightmare of violence? Something breaks...



The White Ensign that had led a gallant host of men into battle sparked the imagination of Larry Willis. He determined to prove himself the best seaman in the Royal Navy but he had some bitter lessons to learn first.

NEXT MONTH there will be **FOUR WAR PICTURE LIBRARIES**, on sale Monday, February 1st. They are:—

No. 36—LONE COMMANDO

No. 38—DESERT PATROL

No. 37—FIRE ONE

No. 39—BOMB ALLEY

FIX BAYONETS

AS WORLD WAR TWO PROGRESSED, SO ALSO DID THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW AND MORE EFFECTIVE WEAPONS. BIGGER GUNS... BOMBS... ROCKETS... TANKS. BUT THE FINAL OUTCOME OF EVERY LAND BATTLE STILL DEPENDED ON THE DASH AND SHEER COURAGE OF THE INFANTRYMAN. THE MAJORITY OF INFANTRY IN THE BRITISH ARMY WERE ONLY 'CIVVIES IN UNIFORM,' BUT THEY FOUGHT WITH THE SKILL AND GALLANTRY OF SEASONED VETERANS. THIS IS THE STORY OF FOUR OF THEM...



Chapter 1. **VERY RAW MATERIAL**

ON A DRIZZLY NIGHT IN 1942, A TRUCK PULLED INTO THE DEPOT OF THE FAMOUS WESSEX REGIMENT WITH FOUR RELUCTANT RECRUITS—CONSCRIPTS ALL!

HEY, MATE—
ARE YOU THE
COMMISSIONAIRE?

YOU'LL SOON FIND OUT WHO
I AM! GET FELL IN AND SHUT UP!
YOU'RE IN THE ARMY NOW!

THE FOUR NEWCOMERS SHAMBLED ALONG, HOPELESSLY TRYING TO PICK UP THE STEP AS SERGEANT BELLOWES MARCHED THEM TO A HUT.

LUMME, FOUR MEN—
ALL WITH TWO LEFT FEET!
LEF' RI, LEF' RI, PICK 'EM UP!

THERE'S RUDENESS, SHOUTING
LIKE THAT! I'M TICH EVANS, FROM
ABERDARE, BY THE WAY.

WOTCHER, TICH.
SLIM HARVEY'S THE
NAME— AND I'M
FROM THE OL' SMOKE—
LONDON TO YOU!

THE SERGEANT LED THE MEN TO A GLOOMY NISSEN HUT, EMPTY EXCEPT FOR A SOLITARY FIGURE.

I'M PUTTING THESE FOUR ROOKIES IN WITH YOU, PRIVATE BAILEY. SHOW 'EM WHERE TO DRAW BLANKETS AND GET 'EM SETTLED IN.

AW, SARGE - I'M A TRAINED SOLDIER - NOT A BLINKIN' NURSE!



BILL BAILEY WAS A REAL 'OLD SWEAT'. HE HAD SEEN ACTION ALL OVER THE GLOBE. WOUNDED IN THE DESERT, HE WAS NOW A PERMANENT FIXTURE AT THE WESSEX DEPOT. UNDER HIS GUIDANCE, THE FOUR DREW THEIR UNIFORMS, KIT AND BLANKETS - AND BAILEY SEIZED THE CHANCE TO SCROUNGE AN EXTRA BREW OF TEA FROM THE COOKHOUSE, TOO! DAVE CONNOR, THE ONLY ONE WHO THOUGHT THE ARMY MIGHT BE FUN, EAGERLY QUESTIONED THE REGULAR.

WHAT'S THE ARMY REALLY LIKE, BILL?

IT'S FINE, DAVE - AS LONG AS YOU DON'T THINK YOU CAN OUTSMART IT. YOUR BIG CHUM SEEMS TO HAVE LEARNED THE FIRST LESSON - TO LAY LOW AND KEEP MUM! WHAT'S YOUR NAME, MATE?

'ODGES - BUT THEY MOSTLY CALLS ME PLUDGE!



Fix Bayonets

NEXT DAY, THE FOUR NEWCOMERS WERE INTRODUCED TO THE ARMY IN REALITY! THE NEXT FEW WEEKS WERE THE TOUGHEST THEY HAD EVER KNOWN.

MARCHING DRILL



RIFLE DRILL



ROUTE MARCHES



BAYONET PRACTICE



MUSKETRY

UNARMED COMBAT



FATIGUES

IT SEEMED THERE WAS NO END TO THE ARMY'S VARIETY OF TORTURES. YET SUDDENLY, TO THEIR SURPRISE, THE FOUR FOUND THEY WERE ALMOST ENJOYING IT!

-AND THEY FOUND TIME OCCASIONALLY TO RELAX!

COME ON, ME LUCKY LADS - MORE YOU PUT DOWN, THE MORE YOU PICK UP!

I AIN'T PICKED UP NUFFIN, YET!

OR ME, PUDDGE?

THE CHINK OF COINS HAD REACHED SERGEANT BELLOWES' SHARP EARS. AND THE ARMY DIDN'T LIKE GAMES OF CHANCE!

YOU 'ORRIBLE MEN - GAMBLIN'! RIGHT - COOKHOUSE FATIGUES FOR EVERY ONE OF YOU!

IT'S NOT GAMBLING WHEN SLIM'S GOT THE BANK - IT'S A STONEWALL CERTAINTY!

BUT, SARGE.



SLIM HAD MORE REASON THAN THE OTHERS TO RESENT THE GAME'S ABRUPT ENDING, AND SUGGESTED A WAY OF REVENGE.

LOOK, LADS—WE CAN GET OUR OWN BACK ON OLD BELLOWES. EVERY NIGHT HE PUTS HIS CLEAN BOOTS BY HIS BEDSIDE SO HE CAN PUT HIS PLATES OF MEAT STRAIGHT INTO 'EM WHEN HE HOPS OUT OF BED. NOW, S'POSING WE...



SLIM'S PERSUASIVE TONGUE WON THE DAY AND THAT EVENING, WHILE THE SERGEANT RELAXED IN THE MESS, THE FOUR WERE BUSY! NEXT MORNING AT REVEILLE...



THE NEXT MOMENT A ROAR OF FEAR AND ANGER SHOOK THE HUT. FOR THE SERGEANT WAS ROOTED FIRMLY TO THE FLOOR!



AT ROLL-CALL, THE FOUR WORE EXPRESSIONS OF LAMBLIKE INNOCENCE. SERGEANT BELLOWES' VOICE WAS DECEPTIVELY MILD, BUT HIS EYES GLEAMED OMINOUSLY!

I HAD A 'ORRIBLE EXPERIENCE THIS MORNING - ME FEET BECAME TEMPORARILY PARALYSED! I ONLY HOPE NONE OF YOU EVER GET IT!



Fix Bayonets

THE SERGEANT DID NOT MISS THE TERRIFIC EFFORTS THE FOUR HAD TO MAKE TO KEEP FROM LAUGHTER. THAT WAS ALL HE NEEDED!

-AND THE BEST WAY TO AVOID IT IS-TO EXERCISE THE FEET! CONNOR, EVANS, HARVEY, HODGES-YOU FOUR LOOK AS THOUGH YOU'RE SICKENING FOR IT. I'LL TAKE YOU FOR A LITTLE WALK THIS MORNING! TWELVE MILES, SAY!



THE SERGEANT WAS AS GOOD AS HIS WORD! AFTER BREAKFAST, THE LUCKLESS FOUR PARADED IN FULL MARCHING ORDER, AND THE SERGEANT SET A CRACKING PACE ACROSS COUNTRY.

FINE IDEA YOURS WAS, SLIM!

WHAT FOOLS WE WERE TO LISTEN TO YOU, AYE!

HOW DID I KNOW HIS MIDDLE NAME WAS SHERLOCK?

YOU OUGHT TO THANK ME FOR THIS, LADS! JUST THINK OF THE OTHER POOR BLOKES, SITTING IN A STUFFY ROOM, BEING LECTURED TO!



SOON THE FOUR GRADUATED FROM THE 'RAW SQUAD' TO THE BATTALION PROPER—WHICH WAS ABOUT TO TAKE PART IN A BIG THREE-DAY EXERCISE.

THE EXERCISE STARTS TOMORROW. THE NINTH WESSEX WILL MOVE FORWARD HERE, AGAINST THEIR OLD RIVALS, THE MIDSHIRES.

MY MEN WILL GO RIGHT THROUGH THOSE MIDSHIRES!



NEXT DAY, THE FOUR HAD THEIR FIRST TASTE OF FULL-SCALE MANOEUVRES—AND DECIDED THEY DID NOT LIKE IT!

I'M PROPER BROWNED OFF WITH THIS LARK! CRAWLING ALONG THIS MUDDY DITCH—NOW WE GOT TO PATROL THAT BLINKIN' WOOD! WISH WE WERE BACK IN BARRACKS!

INSPIRATION I'VE HAD, BOYS! IF YOU'RE TAKEN PRISONER ON THE EXERCISE, YOU'RE SENT BACK TO BARRACKS. WELL NOW...!





THE FOUR MOVED UP INTO THE WOOD, 'ACCIDENTALLY' SHOWING THEMSELVES AGAINST THE SKYLINE. THE MIDSHIRES SOON SPOTTED THEM.



AS THE FOUR WESSEX MEN HAD HOPED, THEY SOON FOUND THEMSELVES AMBUSHED BY THE MIDSHIRES.



RIGHT, LADS - DROP YOUR WEAPONS. YOU'RE PRISONERS!

FAIR ENOUGH!

BARRACKS, HERE WE COME!

IT WAS A JUBILANT FOUR WHO RODE BACK IN TRIUMPH TO THE BARRACKS. BILL BAILEY'S EYES WIDENED AS THEY CLATTERED INTO THE HUT SINGING.



WHAT THE HECK'S UP - THE EXERCISE HAS ONLY JUST STARTED!

FOR US IT'S ALL OVER, BILL.

AR!

WE HAD THE MISFORTUNE TO BE CAPTURED BY THE MIDSHIRES!



IT WAS ALMOST WITH A FEELING OF RELIEF THAT THE FOUR SAW THEIR OLD ENEMY SERGEANT BELLOWES ENTER THE HUT. BUT BILL BAILEY HAD TAUGHT THEM MORE ABOUT THE REGIMENTAL SPIRIT IN A BLISTERING FEW MINUTES THAN THEY HAD LEARNED IN HOURS OF LECTURES!



Fix Bayonets

13

HEAVY RAINS HAD SWOLLEN THE LITTLE RIVER INTO A FIERCE TORRENT. THE MUDDY WATERS TORE HUNGRILY AT THE CRAZY ASSAULT COURSE BRIDGE.



RIGHT LADS—WE'LL TIGHTEN THESE GUY-ROPE'S TO BRING THE BRIDGE CLEAR OF THE WATER.

I HOPE THE BANK'S SAFE—TAIN'T MY PATRIOT NIGHT!

THE BANK WAS NOT SAFE! UNDERMINED BY THE CONSTANT PRESSURE OF THE FLOOD-WATER, IT CRUMBLLED UNDER THE SERGEANT'S HEAVY WEIGHT.



AAARGH!

THE RACING FLOOD CARRIED THE N.C.O SWIFTLY DOWNSTREAM. FOR A SECOND THE FOUR WATCHED IN FROZEN HORROR. THEN—



HE CAN'T SWIM IN THAT CURRENT!

COME ON—THERE'S STILL A CHANCE TO SAVE HIM!

NOBODY COULD—AND THERE'S A WEIR TWO HUNDRED YARDS DOWN!

DAVE LED THE WAY ALONG THE BANK AT FULL SPEED TO WHERE THE RIVER NARROWED JUST BEFORE IT SWEEP OVER THE WEIR. THE ROAR OF THE TUMBLING WATERS THUNDERED WITH DEADLY MENACE.



CLUTCHING EACH OTHER BY THE WAIST, THE PALs SLID INTO THE ICY WATER. THE CURRENT SNATCHED SAVAGELY AT THEM, FIGHTING TO DASH THEM BACK INTO THE BANK. BUT GRIMLY THEY STRUGGLED, INCHING THEIR WAY ACROSS THE RIVER.



THE FOUR STRETCHED THEIR ARMS TILL IT SEEMED THEIR SINEWS WOULD CRACK... THEN...



PUDGE, HIS HUGE MUSCLES SWELLING, HEAVED LIKE A CART-HORSE TO PULL IN THE HUMAN CHAIN.



SAFE ON THE BANK, ALL FIVE MEN LAY GASPING FOR A WHILE. THEN THE SERGEANT SPOKE IN AN ODDLY QUIET VOICE.



Chapter 2. BAPTISM OF FIRE

A FEW DAYS LATER THE WESSEX REGIMENT WAS FORMED UP ON THEIR PARADE GROUND. FROM THE SUPPRESSED EXCITEMENT IN THE COLONEL'S VOICE IT WAS PLAIN THAT SOMETHING BIG WAS BREWING!

I'M PROUD TO SAY THIS REGIMENT HAS BEEN CHOSEN FOR A COMBINED OPERATION ON THE ENEMY COAST. FROM NOW ON WE ARE ALL CONFINED TO BARRACKS... THERE MUST BE RIGID SECURITY...



NEXT DAY, PUDGE WAS ON GUARD AT THE MAIN GATE WHEN AN OFFICER, A STRANGER TO HIM, WALKED THROUGH.

I'M THE NEW SECURITY OFFICER. AREN'T YOU GOING TO ASK TO SEE MY PASS?

I - I THOUGHT AS IT MIGHT ANNOY YOU LIKE, ZUR.



THE LUCKLESS PUDGE RECEIVED A SCATHING LECTURE ON SECURITY.

YOU'LL ASK TO SEE EVERYONE'S PASS - FROM A PRIVATE TO A GENERAL - AND IF HE HASN'T GOT ONE - CLAP HIM IN THE GUARDROOM! UNDERSTAND?

YESSIR! INDEED OI WILL!



SO, A FEW MINUTES LATER WHEN THE COLONEL OF THE MIDSHIRES STROLLED IN AND WAS UNABLE TO PRODUCE A PASS WHICH PUDGE POLITELY REQUESTED . . .

SORRY, SIR—YOU AIN'T GOT NO PASS, HAVE 'EE? GUARD... TURN OUT!

BLAST IT, MAN—I'M COLONEL HAWKE OF THE MIDSHIRES!



SEETHING WITH FURY, THE MIDSHIRE COMMANDER WAS ESCORTED TO THE GUARDROOM AND KEPT THERE TILL THE COLONEL OF THE WESSEX REGIMENT ARRIVED TO IDENTIFY HIM.

...TREATED LIKE A DARNED FIFTH-COLUMNIST.

FRANKLY, HAWKE, I'M GLAD MY SENTRY IS SO SECURITY-CONSCIOUS! WE WESSEX PRIDE OURSELVES ON OUR EFFICIENCY!



FOR THE NEXT TWO WEEKS, THE REGIMENT UNDERWENT INTENSIVE TRAINING IN A COASTAL AREA. THEN, ON A MISTY, MOONLESS NIGHT THEY EMBARKED.

LIKE GOING INTO THE ARK, AIN'T IT?

AYE, WITH OLD BELLY-ACHE AS NOAH!

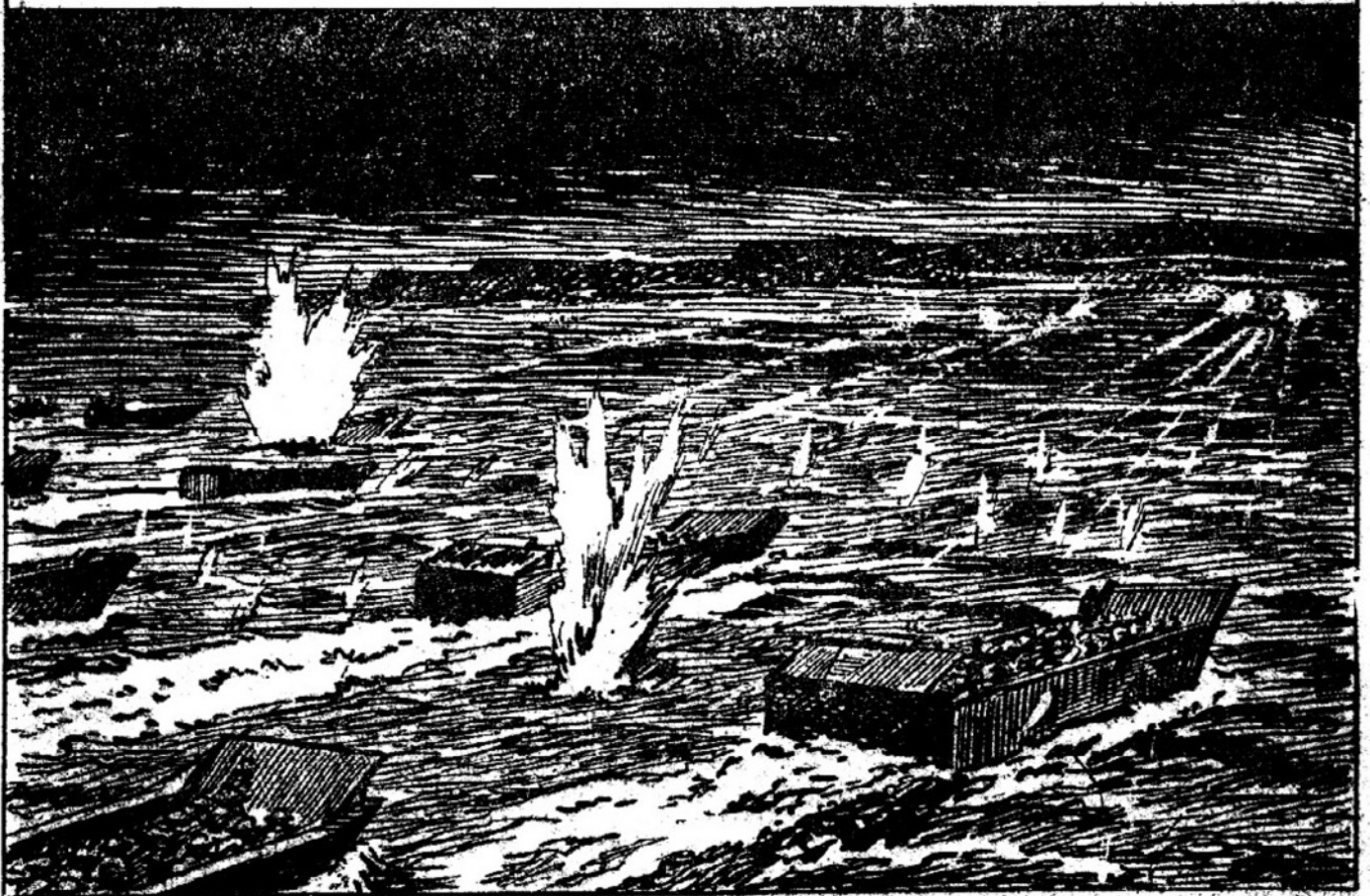
GET A MOVE ON—IT'LL BE DAWN BEFORE WE START!



SILENCE FELL AS THE FLEET OF LANDING CRAFT CHUGGED THROUGH THE OILY SWELL. THIS WAS THE BIG TEST—AND EACH MAN WAS WONDERING HOW HE WOULD STAND UP TO IT.



AS THE RAIDING CRAFT NEARED THE FRENCH COAST, THEY WERE SHROUDED IN MIST, BUT THE THROB OF THEIR ENGINES HAD ALERTED THE GERMANS. STREAMS OF TRACER SNAKED FROM THE SHORE LIKE WHIPLASHES AS THE BRITISH FORCE APPROACHED...





AS THE TROOPS HIT THE BEACH, A VICIOUS HAIL OF MACHINE-GUN FIRE SCYTHED THROUGH THEM.



WITH STOLID DELIBERATION, PUDGE PULLED HIS RIFLE INTO HIS SHOULDER AND TOOK AIM. HE MIGHT HAVE BEEN RABBIT SHOOTING ON THE COMMON AT HOME!

RECK'N I CAN
SHUT 'ER UP!



THE COUNTRYMAN POURED FIVE ROUNDS RAPID AT THE WICKEDLY FLICKERING FLAME THAT MARKED THE MACHINE-GUN'S MUZZLE, AND THE GUN FELL SUDDENLY SILENT. BUT NOW SHELLS' BEGAN TO BURST ON THE BEACH!

I DON'T CARE FOR
THIS SHELLING --
LET'S GO AND
TELL JERRY
TO PACK IT
UP!

GOSH, SLIM --
WE CAN'T
SPEAK
GERMAN!



AT THE TOP OF THE BEACH, THEY FOUND THEIR WAY BARRED BY ELABORATE BARBED WIRE ENTANGLEMENTS. WITHOUT HESITATION DAVE THREW HIMSELF FORWARD.

RIGHT, BOYS,
WALK OVER
ON ME!





THE FIRST GERMANS THEY ENCOUNTERED, TAKEN BY SURPRISE AND HALF-ASLEEP, WERE EASILY CAPTURED.



THE GERMANS WERE TAKEN DOWN THE STREET TO WHERE THE PROVOST SERGEANT WAS COLLECTING THE PRISONERS. DAVE AND SLIM RACED INTO THE GERMAN BILLET TO WINKLE OUT ANY OTHERS. . .



WITH A QUICK JERK, DAVE LIFTED THE CLOTH. BUT INSTEAD OF THE HULKING GERMAN HE EXPECTED, HE FOUND HIMSELF STARING INTO THE FRIGHTENED EYES OF A FRENCHWOMAN.



GENTLY DAVE HELPED THE TREMBLING PAIR OUT, WATCHED IN SILENCE BY SLIM.



THE COCKNEY STARED BITTERLY AT THE PICTURE OF HITLER WHICH THE GERMANS HAD HUNG ON THE WALL.

DARN YOU, HITLER—
DARN YOU! FOR ALL
THE MISERY YOU'VE
BROUGHT ON
INNOCENT WOMEN
AND KIDS!



FIERED WITH A BURNING HATRED OF THE NAZIS, THE TWO RACED INTO THE STREET AGAIN, WITH BUT ONE THOUGHT—TO FIGHT THE GERMANS.

A NEST OF
JERRIES IN THAT
HOUSE THERE!

WHAT ARE WE
WAITING FOR—
LET'S GET 'EM!



DAVE TOSSED A GRENADE NEATLY THROUGH THE SHATTERED WINDOW OF THE HOUSE. AS IT EXPLODED, THE FOUR HURLED THEMSELVES FORWARD . . .

TAKE THAT,
JERRY!

AARGH!

INTO 'EM,
LADS!

SCHWEIN!



THE FIGHT WAS SHORT. NO QUARTER WAS ASKED - NONE GIVEN. AT LAST, PANTING HEAVILY, THE BRITONS LOOKED DOWN IN SILENCE AT THE FALLEN ENEMY.



4 NEW ISSUES OF WAR PICTURE LIBRARY

No. 36 LONE COMMANDO

No. 38 DESERT PATROL

No. 37 FIRE ONE

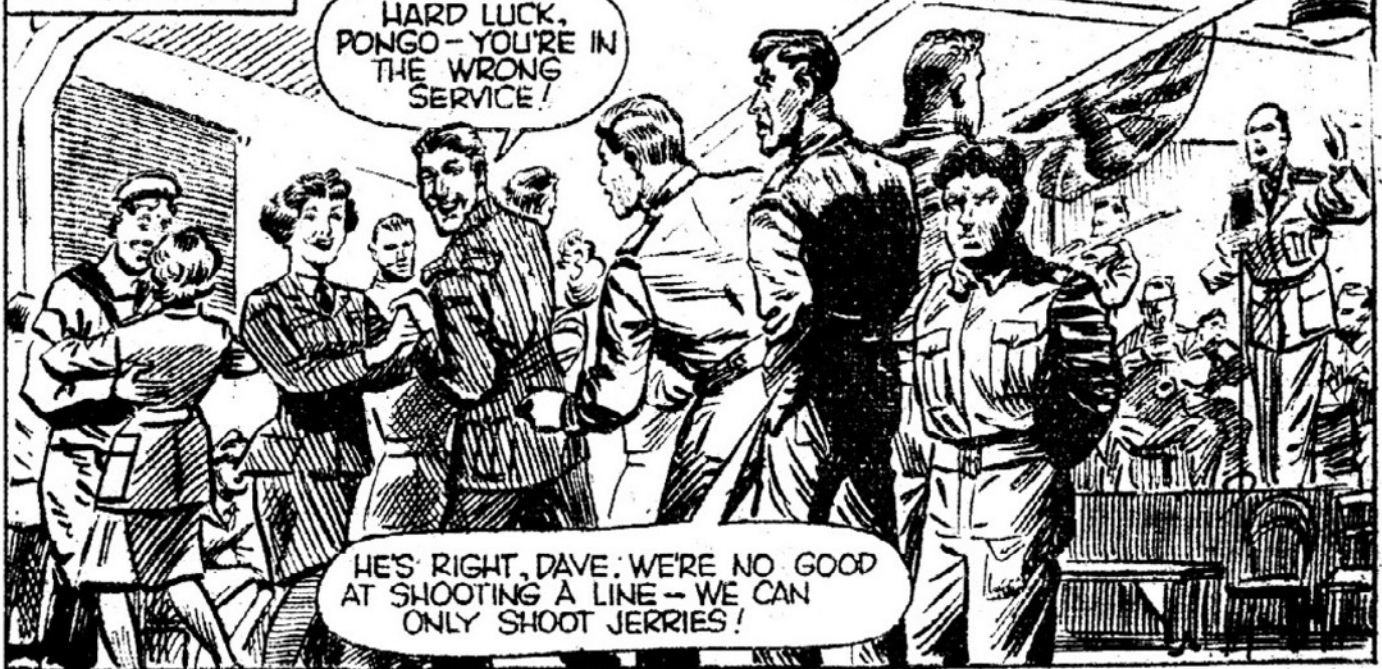
No. 39 BOMB ALLEY

ON SALE MONDAY 1st FEBRUARY

Chapter 3.

RECCE PATROL

THE RAID GAVE THE FOUR A NEW KIND OF CONFIDENCE IN EACH OTHER, AND PRIDE IN THEIR REGIMENT. BUT AT NAAFI DANCES, THEIR ILL-FITTING BATTLEDRESSES CUT LITTLE ICE!



JUST THEN THE MICROPHONE CRACKLED INTO LIFE, AND THE ANNOUNCEMENT MADE THE FOUR CHUMS LOOK AT EACH OTHER WONDERINGLY. . .



THEY HURRIED BACK TO BARRACKS, TO FIND THE REGIMENT BEING ISSUED WITH TROPICAL KIT!

SHORTS K.D.
SHIRTS K.D. - TWO,
TOPEE, SOLAR-ONE...

WHERE BE
US GOIN'
SARGE?

IF I KNOW
ANYTHING ABOUT
THE ARMY,
ME LAD -
ICELAND!



THE REGIMENT ENTRAINED FOR GLASGOW, WHERE THEY CROWDED ABOARD A PACKED TROOPSHIP LYING IN THE CLYDE. AND STILL IT WAS 'DESTINATION UNKNOWN'!

RIGHT, HERE YOU EAT
AND SLEEP - TILL WE GET
THERE. AND WHERE
THAT IS, THE LORD
ONLY KNOWS!

BLIMEY - CHOP
OFF OUR HEADS
AND YOU WOULDN'T
KNOW US FROM
SARDINES!

SCANDALOUS
- SUCH
OVERCROWDING,
MUN!



IT WAS NOT TILL THEY HAD BEEN THREE DAYS AT SEA THAT THE TROOPS LEARNED THEIR DESTINATION.

WE'RE BOUND FOR A SPOT ON THE ITALIAN COAST. THE ALLIES HAVE ESTABLISHED A BEACH-HEAD THERE - BUT JERRY'S GOING ALL OUT TO PUSH THEM INTO THE SEA. AND THE WESSEX ARE GOING TO SEE THAT HE DOESN'T!

ITALY! LOVE ITALIAN OPERA, I DO!



THE TROOPSHIP MOVED WELL OFF THE COAST, AND THE MEN OF THE WESSEX REGIMENT CLAMBERED DOWN INTO LANDING CRAFT. THEN, HEAVILY-LADEN, THEY WADED ASHORE ON TO THE BEACH-HEAD WHOSE NAME WAS TO LIVE IN HISTORY-ANZIO!

WELCOME TO ITALY! I SHOULDN'T LINGER HERE... JERRY'S DUE TO STONK IT AT ANY MOMENT, AND IT WON'T BE TOO HEALTHY! YOU'LL BE TAKING OVER NIGHTINGALE SECTOR TONIGHT.

THANKS. LET'S HOPE NIGHTINGALE SECTOR'S AS PEACEFUL AS IT SOUNDS!



THAT NIGHT THE WESSEX MOVED INTO FORWARD POSITIONS ON THE RIM OF THE BEACH-HEAD, IN THE IRONICALLY-NAMED NIGHTINGALE SECTOR. HERE THE ONLY WHISTLE HEARD WAS THE HIDEOUS WHISTLE OF A SHELL OR MORTAR-BOMB!

OKAY, CHUMS—WE'RE RELIEVING YOU!

AND IT'S WELCOME YOU ARE! 'TIS LITTLE REST Y'LL GET IN THIS SECTOR!



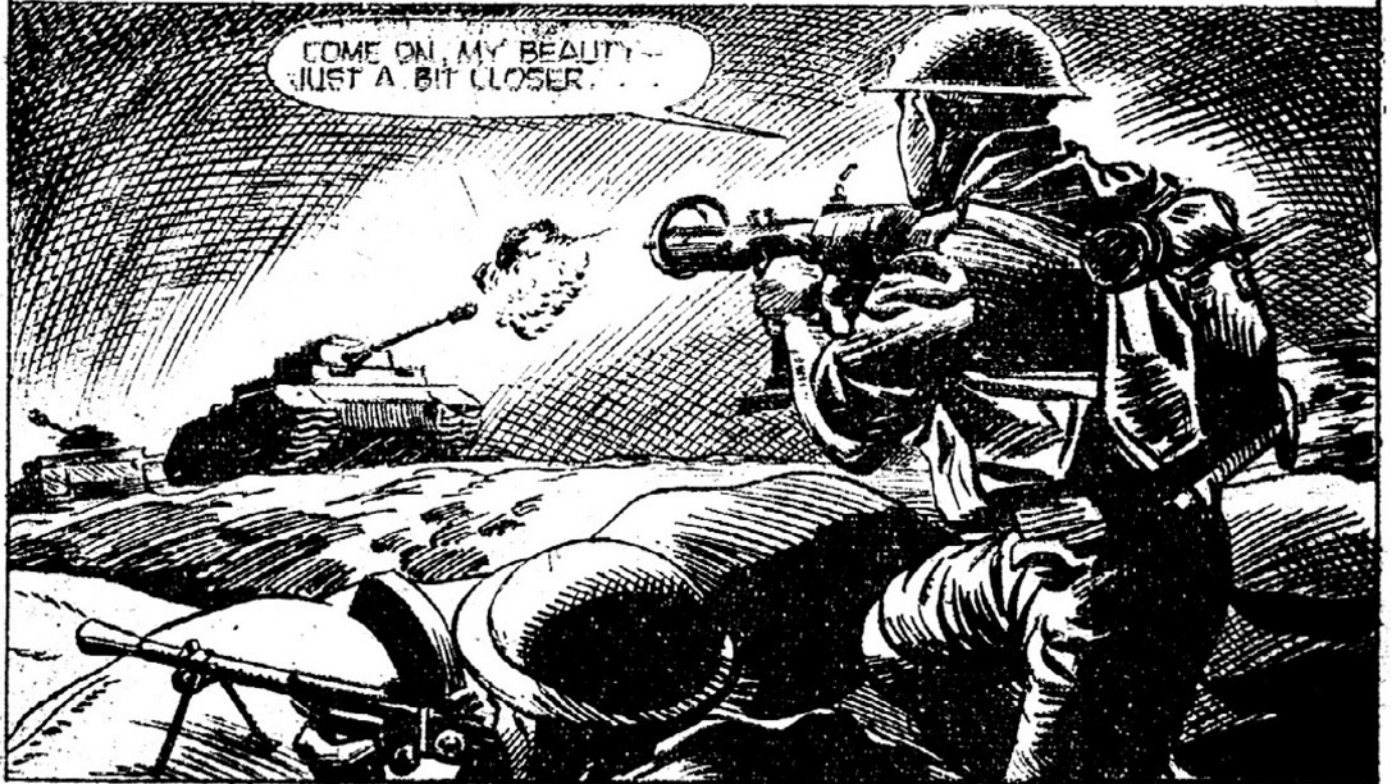
THE WESSEX WERE SOON TO LEARN THE TRUTH OF THE IRISHMAN'S WORDS. THAT NIGHT THE GERMANS LAUNCHED A FULL-SCALE ATTACK ON NIGHTINGALE SECTOR.

GET THE PIAT MORTAR, TICH, THEY'RE BRINGING UP TANKS!

TANKS, IS IT? WE'LL SEE ABOUT THAT!



UNDER DAVE'S WITHERING BREN FIRE, THE GERMAN INFANTRY ATTACK CRUMBLING AND MELTED. BUT THE HUGE TIGER TANKS LUMBERED ON. THEIR ONLY OPPOSITION WAS ONE SMALL WELSHMAN, ARMED WITH A WEAPON THAT LOOKED HOME-MADE.



Fix Bayonets

THE ATTACK WAS BROKEN UP— BUT THERE WAS NO RESPIRE FOR THE WESSEX... OR ANY TROOPS IN THE BEACH-HEAD. ANZIO WAS A VITAL POINT IN THE GERMAN FLANK, AND DESPERATELY THEY TRIED TO HOLD IT! ATTACK FOLLOWED ATTACK— AND WHEN THE GERMANS WEREN'T ATTACKING, THE ALLIES WERE COUNTER-ATTACKING.



EVEN 'QUIETER' MOMENTS WERE FRAUGHT WITH DANGER.



LOOK, DAVE—
A LUGER PISTOL.
I CAN FLOG
THAT TO THE
YANKS!

LEAVE IT,
PUDGE—
LEAVE IT!

THE LUGER WAS A BOOBY-TRAP—
ONE OF MANY THE GERMANS LAID
FOR THE UNWARY.

IF YOU'D GRABBED THE LUGER,
YOU'D HAVE BLOWN YOURSELF
TO SMITHEREENS!

PHEW! OLD JERRY'S
MAIN CRAFTY. DAVE,
AIN'T HE?



BETWEEN ATTACKS, EACH SIDE CARRIED OUT ACTIVE PATROLS - SO DULL, EXCEPT FOR THOSE WHO TOOK PART!

IT'S A CUSHY PATROL TONIGHT, LADS. AN EYTIE PARTISAN HAS REPORTED THAT CUISA VILLAGE IS CLEAR OF JERRIES, AND WE'VE ONLY GOT TO CONFIRM IT.

A CUSHY PATROL IS LIKE THE WELSH DRAGON - THERE'S NO SUCH THING, MUN!

CAN'T WE TAKE THE EYTIE'S WORD FOR IT?

EXPERTLY THE PATROL SLIPPED TOWARDS THE GERMAN LINE AND MELTED INTO THE DARKNESS.

WE'LL BE BACK IN ABOUT TWO HOURS - SO DON'T SHOOT US UP!

RIGHT. THE CHALLENGE IS 'DAILY' - AND THE ANSWER'S 'MIRROR'.



TAKING ADVANTAGE OF EVERY SCRAP OF COVER, THE CORPORAL LED THE PATROL FORWARD. SUDDENLY--



SLIM WAS RIGHT. THE CORPORAL'S FOOT HAD CAUGHT A TRIP-WIRE AND DETONATED A MINE.





Fix Bayonets

DAVE LED THE PATROL FORWARD TO GET A CLOSER LOOK.

THERE'S SOMETHING BIG
ON HERE - WE'VE GOT TO GET
THIS GEN BACK TO H.Q. START
SENDING, SLIM.

THE SET'S NOT
WORKING - I CAN'T GET
THROUGH! THE CORPORAL
WAS CARRYING IT
WHEN HE GOT HIT.



THE SUDDEN CRUNCH
OF JACK-BOOTS
INTERRUPTED DAVE'S
REPLY. A GERMAN
PATROL WAS RETURNING
DOWN THE ROAD TO
CUIZA!

A JERRY
PATROL -
DOWN!



BUT THE GERMANS HAD NOT GONE FIFTY YARDS DOWN THE TRACK WHEN ONE OF THEM TURNED AND CAUGHT SIGHT OF THE BRITISH PATROL. THEY SLIPPED INTO THE COVER OF A FOLD IN THE GROUND AND OPENED FIRE ON THE FOUR WESSEX MEN, WHO INSTANTLY RETALIATED.

IT'S A STRONG FIGHTING PATROL. WE CAN'T HOLD 'EM HERE FOR LONG—AND WE'D NEVER BREAK THROUGH.

WHAT'S THE ANSWER THEN, DAVE?

GIVE A FEW ROUNDS RAPID TO MAKE 'EM DUCK—THEN WE'LL MAKE A BOLT FOR THAT RUINED FARM BEHIND US. WE CAN HOLD THEM THERE!

FOR A FEW MOMENTS THE FOUR KEPT UP A FIERCE DUEL WITH THE GERMAN PATROL.

RIGHT—NOW!



Fix Bayonets

BULLETS WHIPPED AND SPATTERED ROUND THEM AS THEY RACED DESPERATELY FOR THE FARMHOUSE. THEN PUDGE STAGGERED.

PUDGE IS HIT!

AAAAGH!

STOPPED ONE IN THE LEG! YOU GO ON, SLIM!

DON'T BE DAFT. YOU OWE ME FIVE BOB FROM PONTOON!

AS DAVE LED THE WAY INTO THE RUINED FARM . . .

OH-OH-JERRIES!

AS THE TWO HUNS RUSHED HIM, DAVE'S RIFLE BARKED ONCE... TWICE...



SLIM AND TICH LURCHED IN, SUPPORTING PUDGE BETWEEN THEM.

PUDGE'S
HIT IN THE
LEG.

LOOK AFTER HIM, SLIM—
PUT A FIELD DRESSING ON IT.
TICH, GIVE ME A HAND WITH
THESE STONES. WE'VE GOT
TO STRENGTHEN THIS
POSITION BEFORE
THEY ATTACK.



PUDGE WAS MADE AS COMFORTABLE AS SLIM COULD MANAGE, AND PROPPED UP WHERE HE COULD WATCH FOR ANY SIGN OF ATTACK. FEVERISHLY THE OTHER THREE WORKED TO BUILD A BARRICADE!



NO SIGN
OF 'EM YET,
DAVE.

THEY'LL COME ALL RIGHT!
WE'VE SEEN TOO MUCH FOR
THEM TO LET US GET AWAY.
FROM THE STUFF THEY'VE
GOT HERE IT'S PLAIN
THAT THEY'RE PLANNING
TO LAUNCH AN ALL-OUT
ATTACK ON THIS SECTOR.
WE'VE GOT TO GET
WORD BACK SOMEHOW!

AT LAST THE PLACE WAS BARRICADED AND FORTIFIED TO DAVE'S SATISFACTION. BUT STILL THE GERMANS DIDN'T COME! THE MINUTES DRAGGED LIKE HOURS AND WITH RIFLES COCKED, READY FOR INSTANT ACTION, THE FOUR MEN WAITED.



HURRY UP, YOU
PERISHIN' JERRIES!

WHAT SAY I
MAKE A DASH
FOR IT, DAVE?

NOT A CHANCE,
TICH. THAT'S JUST
WHAT THEY'D LIKE
US TO DO. YOU
WOULDN'T GET
FIVE YARDS!

SUDDENLY A GUTTURAL VOICE
CALLED FROM THE DARKNESS.

ENGLANDERS!
SURRENDER!

COME
AND GET
US!

DON'T FIRE
TILL YOU'VE GOT
A GOOD
TARGET!

PUDGE'S CATLIKE EYES
SPOTTED A MOVEMENT.

THEY'RE COMIN' -
LOOK - BY THAT
BUSH!



Fix Bayonets

THE COUNTRYMAN'S RIFLE CRACKED, AND THERE WAS A HOWL OF PAIN AS HIS BULLET FOUND A MARK. UNABLE TO TAKE THE FOUR BY SURPRISE, THE GERMAN'S CHARGED FORWARD.

LET 'EM
HAVE IT,
BOYS!



UNDER THE DEADLY ACCURATE FIRE OF THE DEFENDERS, THE GERMAN'S FALTERED - THEN BROKE AND RAN.

MORE OF A STALEMATE, I RECKON. THEY CAN'T GET US - BUT WE CAN'T GET OUT! ONE CONSOLATION - THEY CAN'T USE HEAVY STUFF - IT WOULD GIVE AWAY WHAT THEY'VE GOT IN THIS AREA TO OUR BOYS.

WE'VE BEATEN
'EM!



GLUMLY SLIM WENT BACK TO HIS HOPELESS TASK OF TRYING TO REPAIR THE RADIO. A GROAN FROM PUDGE BROKE THE SILENCE. HIS FACE ASHEN, HE WAS BITING HIS LIPS IN AGONY.

HOW IS IT PUDGE, OLD SON?

HURTS A BIT, DAVE. LOOK - I'D NEVER BE ABLE TO MAKE IT BACK - NEXT TIME THEY ATTACK, YOU THREE GET OUT THE BACK WAY WHILE I KEEP 'EM BUSY!

WE CAN'T LEAVE YOU PUDGE, MUN!

FOR A MOMENT DAVE HESITATED, TORN BETWEEN HIS HATRED OF LEAVING A PAL AND HIS KNOWLEDGE THAT PUDGE WAS RIGHT.

YOU'VE GOT TO DO IT THIS WAY - YOU'VE GOT TO!

GUESS YOU'RE RIGHT, PUDGE - BUT I WISH IT WAS ME STAYING.

THEY'RE COMING AGAIN!

THE GERMANS RETURNED TO THE ATTACK WITH RENEWED FURY. GRIMLY THE DEFENDERS FOUGHT BACK, MAKING EVERY SHOT COUNT, BUT THE NAZIS INCHED REMORSELESSLY FORWARD - AND INSIDE THE FARM AMMUNITION WAS RUNNING LOW!

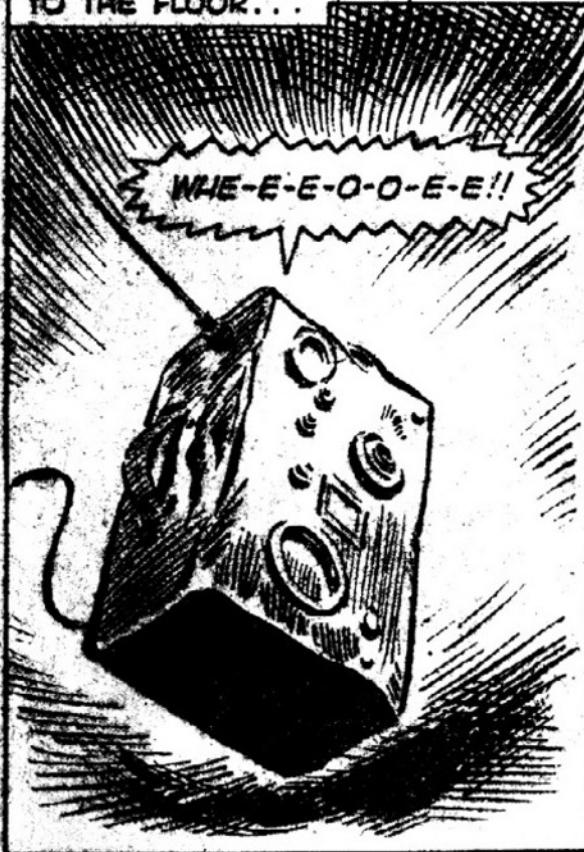
ONE FINAL RUSH AND THEY'LL BE ON US!

IF ONLY THIS BLOOMIN' RADIO WORKED...

I'VE ONLY GOT FIVE ROUNDS LEFT, DAVE!

GO ON, LADS. TIME TO BOLT FOR IT - I'LL KEEP THEIR HEADS DOWN FOR YOU.

IN EXASPERATION, SLIM GAVE THE WIRELESS SET A THUMP AND IT FELL TO THE FLOOR...



THE PALS STARED INCREDULOUSLY AT THE RADIO, FROM WHICH CAME A SHRILL WHISTLE.



DAVE RAPPED OUT HIS REPORT WITH MACHINE-GUN RAPIDITY.



*Chapter 4.***BOMBARDMENT**

TO HIS COMPANIONS, DAVE'S ACTION IN CALLING DOWN A BOMBARDMENT ON THEIR OWN POSITION SEEMED SUICIDAL.

IT GIVES US A DOG'S CHANCE, LADS - AND THAT'S MORE THAN WE HAD BEFORE! IF WE CAN HOLD THOSE JERRIES OFF FOR A FEW MORE MINUTES UNTIL IT STARTS...



BUT EVEN AS HE SPOKE, THERE WAS A SCREAM LIKE TEN THOUSAND FURIES AND THE FIRST EARTH-SHAKING SALVO CRASHED DOWN ON CLISA.



Fix Bayonets

AS THE SHELLS RAINED DOWN IN EVER-INCREASING INTENSITY, FRIEND AND FOE ALIKE CROUCHED CLOSE TO THE SHAKING GROUND. THEN BETWEEN SALVOS THE FOUR MEN HEARD THE OMINOUS DRONE OF AIRCRAFT!



LOOK—IT'S DAYBREAK
—AND HERE COME
THE BOMBERS!

IF THE SHELLS
DON'T GET US—
THE BOMBS
WILL!

AMID THE TERRIBLE THUNDER OF HIGH EXPLOSIVE,
DAVE YELLED OUT HIS PLAN.



THIS IS OUR CHANCE
TO GET OUT—AND WE'LL
TAKE PUDGE WITH US!

BUT I
CAN'T WALK,
DAVE!

DAVE ROSE TO HIS FEET AND MADE FOR THE DOOR . . .

WITH ANY LUCK, YOU WON'T HAVE TO WALK, PUDGE! BACK SOON, CHUMS!



HEEDLESS OF SLICING STEEL SPLINTERS AND JAGGED, WHITE-HOT PIECES OF FLYING SHRAPNEL, DAVE DARTED OUT INTO THE INFERNO . . .

I'M SO COVERED IN DUST, NO JERRY WILL RECOGNISE ME! THEY'VE ALL GOT THEIR HEADS WELL DOWN, ANYWAY!



A HUNDRED YARDS FROM THE FARM, DAVE CAME UPON A GERMAN LORRY, SEEMINGLY ABANDONED IN THE BOMBARDMENT.



THIS LOOKS JUST WHAT I'M AFTER!

BUT AS HE CLAMBERED
INTO THE DRIVING CAB...

ACH...
SO!

THE ONLY
JERRY WHO HASN'T
GONE TO GROUND
— AND I PICK HIS
TRUCK TO PINCH!



THE GERMAN LANDED ON DAVE WITH A THUD THAT DROVE THE BREATH FROM HIS BODY. SAVAGELY THEY STRUGGLED...



PIG OF AN
ENGLANDER—
DIE!

THERE WAS A MIST BEFORE DAVE'S EYES AND HE FELT HIS SENSES REELING. DESPERATELY HE THRUST HIS LEG BENEATH THE GERMAN'S BODY... AND HEAVED.

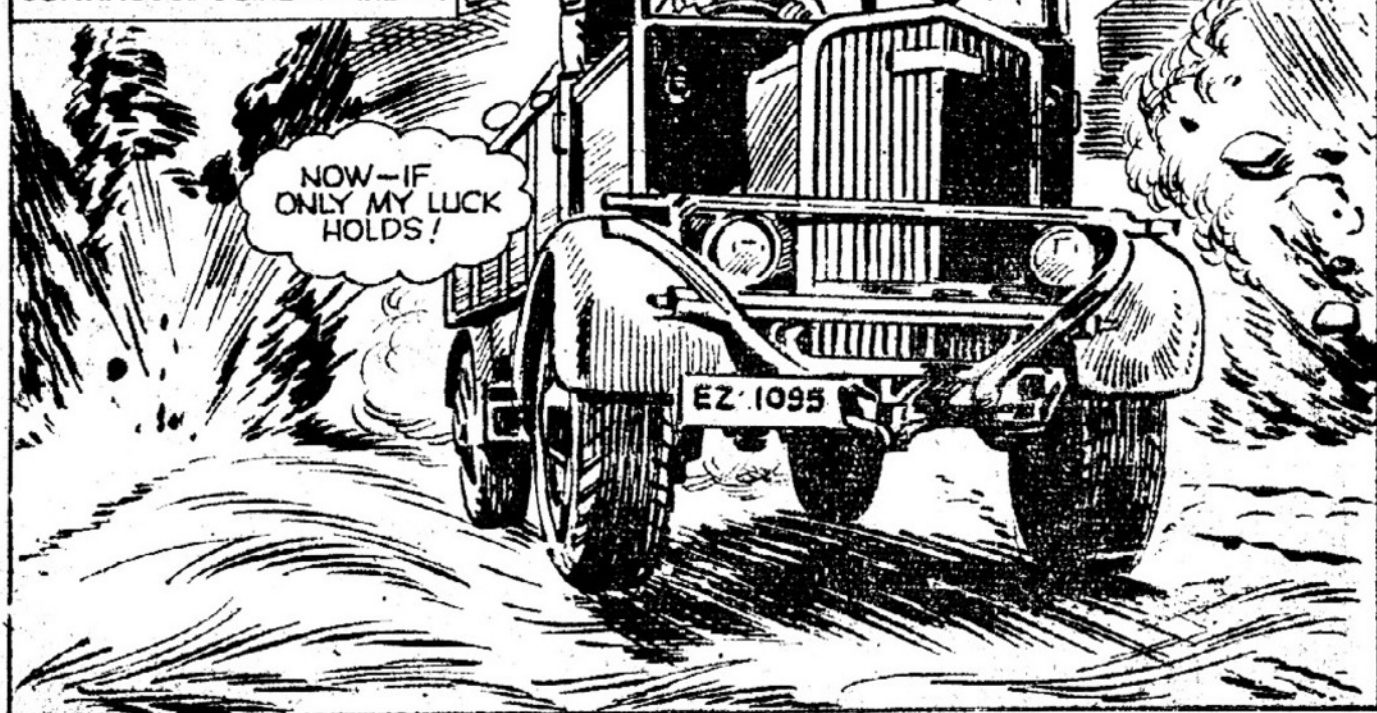


AARGH!

GET
OFF!



FORTUNATELY THE ENGINE STARTED WITHOUT ANY TROUBLE. WITH FOOT PRESSED HARD ON THE ACCELERATOR, DAVE DROVE THE TRUCK THROUGH THE CONTINUOUS BOMBARDMENT.





THE GERMAN TRUCK PULLED UP OUTSIDE THE FARM, CAUSING A MOMENTARY THRILL OF ALARM TO THE DEFENDERS INSIDE...



Fix Bayonets

TICH AND SLIM LIFTED
PLUDGE INTO THE CAB—
THEN JUMPED ON TO
THE RUNNING-BOARD.

RIGHT, DAVE—
LET HER RIP!

AND MIND
THE BUMPS!

THE TRUCK POUNDED DOWN THE TRACK
TOWARDS THE BRITISH LINES.

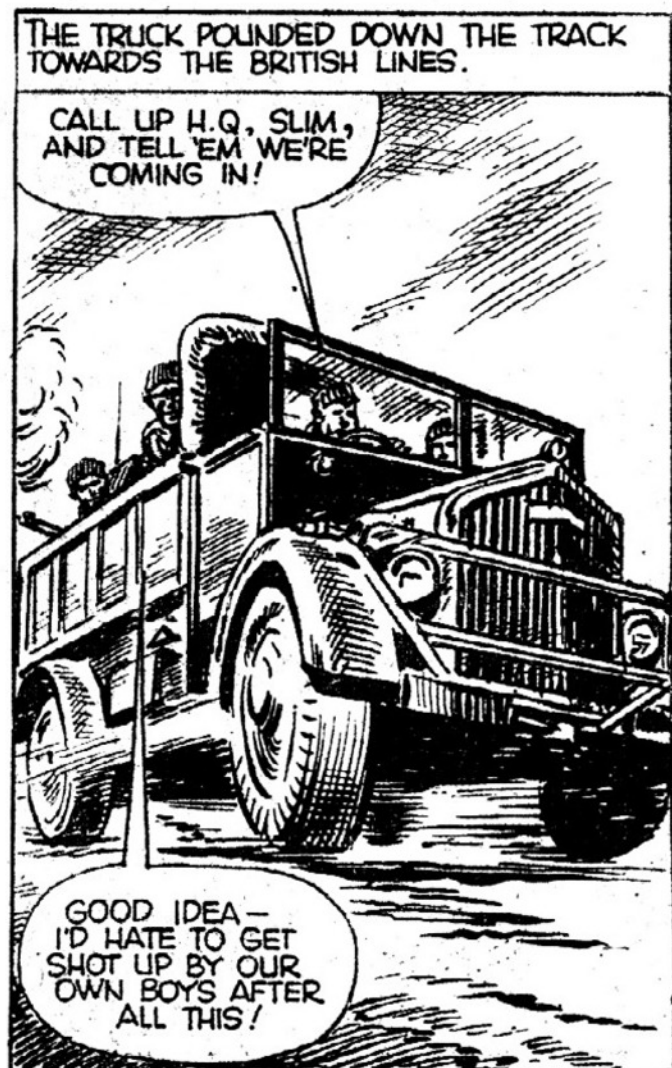
CALL UP H.Q., SLIM,
AND TELL 'EM WE'RE
COMING IN!

BUT THEY WERE NOT YET CLEAR OF THE
GERMAN LINES!

A JERRY
OFFICER! WHAT
DO WE DO—
RUN HIM DOWN?

I'VE GOT
A BETTER
IDEA!

GOOD IDEA—
I'D HATE TO GET
SHOT UP BY OUR
OWN BOYS AFTER
ALL THIS!



DAVE SLOWED THE LORRY TO A CRAWL AS THEY CAME ALONGSIDE THE GERMAN.



SLIM'S LONG ARMS SNAKED OUT AND GRABBED THE STARTLED GERMAN OFFICER, HOISTING HIM OFF THE GROUND.



SLIM KEPT A FIRM NECK-GRIP ON HIS PRISONER AS THEY DROVE BACK IN TRIUMPH THROUGH THE BRITISH FORWARD POSITIONS.

GOSH, SLIM —
WHERE DID YOU
GET THE TRUCK?

A PRESENT
FROM JERRY!

THE PALS SAW PUDGE ON HIS WAY
TO THE DRESSING STATION . . .

SO LONG, PUDGE!
GOOD LUCK!

DON'T WORRY
— OI'LL BE
BACK!

CONNOR,
HARVEY, EVANS
— REPORT TO
THE C.O.!



THE COLONEL LISTENED WITH GRIM APPROVAL AS DAVE TOLD OF THE NIGHT'S WORK.

... SO WE SORT OF FOUND THIS TRUCK AND CAME BACK, SIR!

YOUR INFORMATION MAY WELL HAVE A DECISIVE EFFECT ON THE WHOLE CAMPAIGN. YOU'VE DONE WELL!



AS THE THREE SALUTED AND LEFT, SERGEANT BELLOWE'S WAS WAITING FOR THEM!

JUST BECAUSE THE COLONEL PRAISED YOU, DON'T THINK YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE IT CUSHY ROUND HERE. GET OVER TO THE COOKHOUSE --

OH NO!



--AND TELL THE COOK-CORPORAL TO GIVE YOU THREE BIG BREAKFASTS-- WITH A RUM RATION EACH! THEN GO AND GET SOME KIP!

THANKS, SARGE!



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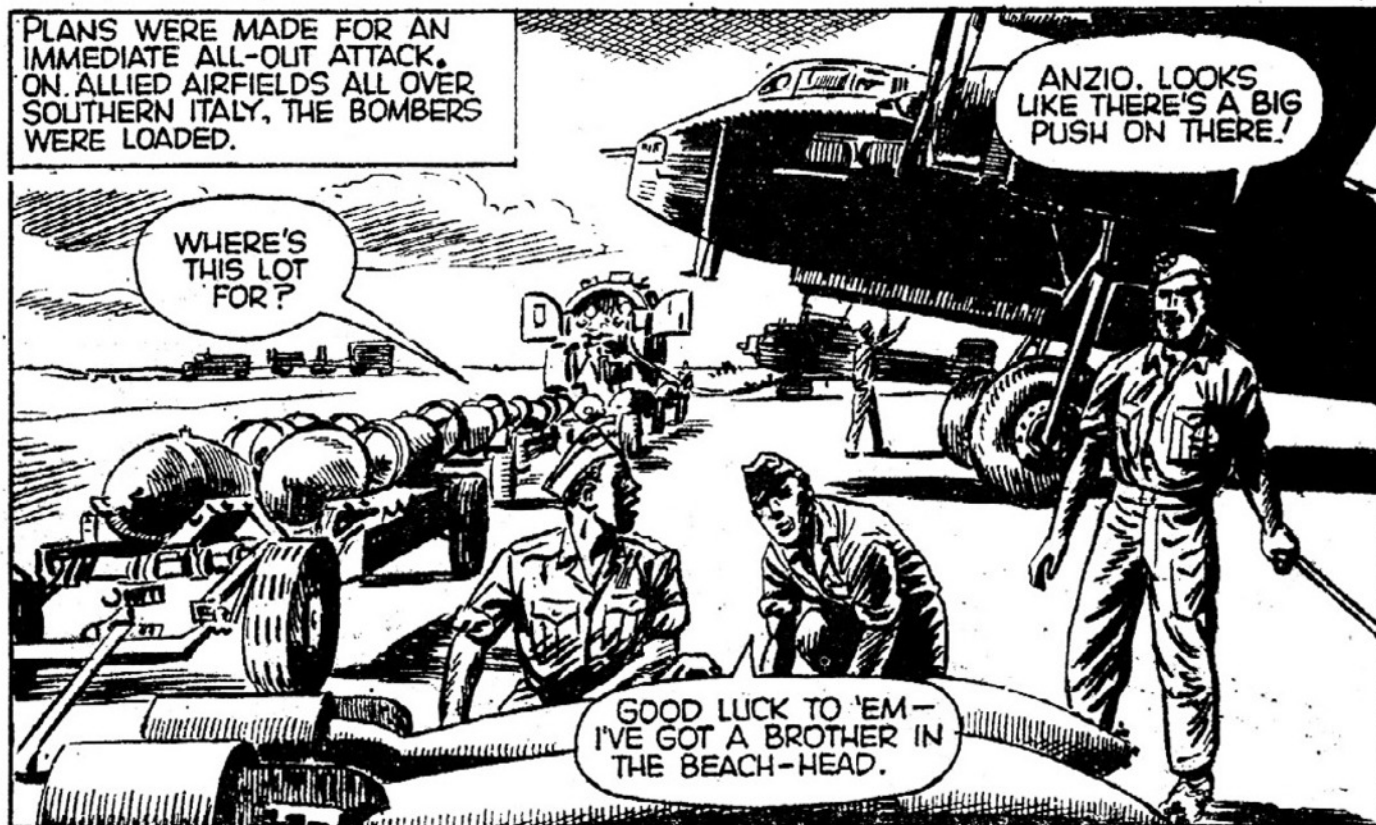
ON SALE MONDAY 1st FEBRUARY

Chapter 5. BREAK THROUGH

THANKS TO THE INFORMATION DAVE HAD SENT BACK BY RADIO, THE GERMAN FORCES WHICH HAD BEEN MASSED FOR A FULL-SCALE ATTACK, HAD BEEN GIVEN A SEVERE MAULING AND THE ALLIED HIGH COMMAND WAS QUICK TO REALISE THE POSSIBILITIES.



PLANS WERE MADE FOR AN IMMEDIATE ALL-OUT ATTACK. ON ALLIED AIRFIELDS ALL OVER SOUTHERN ITALY, THE BOMBERS WERE LOADED.



IN THE BEACH-HEAD, GUNS WERE LAID AND AMMUNITION BROUGHT UP.



IN THE FORWARD POSITIONS THE INFANTRY CHECKED THEIR WEAPONS — AND WAITED. AN UNEASY HUSH LAY OVER THE BATTLEFIELD — LIKE THE LULL BEFORE A TYPHOON.



Fix Bayonets



THE MINUTES TICKED AWAY WITH AGONISING SLOWNESS. A MINUTE TO GO—AND THE ORDER CAME 'FIX BAYONETS!' AN OMINOUS CLICK RAN ALONG THE WHOLE FRONT, AND THERE WAS A FAINT GLITTER AS MOONLIGHT CAUGHT THE COLD STEEL OF BAYONETS.



ZERO HOUR! SUDDENLY THE WHOLE FRONT ERUPTED LIKE A DOZEN VOLCANOES AS A THOUSAND GUNS SPOKE AT ONCE; AND A THOUSAND FLASHES MELTED INTO ONE BLINDING LIGHT.



FOR HALF AN HOUR THE INFANTRY CROUCHED IN THEIR TRENCHES AS THE HURRICANE OF SHELLS SCREAMED OVERHEAD TOWARDS THE GERMAN FRONT LINE.



THERE CAME A MOMENTARY LULL IN THE BARRAGE AS THE GUNNERS SWITCHED TO FRESH TARGETS. A WHISTLE SHRILLED - AND FROM THOUSANDS OF FOXHOLES LEAPED THE MEN IN WHOSE HANDS THE BATTLE LAY - THE INFANTRY!



THE GERMAN GUNNERS HAD FOUND THE RANGE, AND SHELLS BEGAN TO FALL AMONG THE ADVANCING TROOPS. BUT THEY NEVER FALTERED; JUST HUNCHED THEIR SHOULDERS — AND PRESSED GRIMLY FORWARD.



AS THE WESSEX NEARED THEIR FIRST OBJECTIVE, THE BARRAGE LIFTED ON TO THE NEXT LINE. IT SEEMED THAT NOTHING COULD HAVE SURVIVED THAT HELLISH BOMBARDMENT--- YET AS THEY PREPARED FOR THE FINAL WILD CHARGE, MACHINE GUNS SCYTHED INTO THEM.

MOST OF THE FIRE'S COMING FROM THAT PILL-BOX!

I USED TO PLAY SCRUM-HALF FOR ABERDARE. I'LL WORK ROUND ON THE BLIND SIDE AND GIVE THEM THIS!



BEFORE THE OTHER TWO REALISED WHAT TICH WAS UP TO, HE WAS RACING FORWARD TOWARDS THE GERMAN STRONGPOINT

SMALL I AM -- THEY'LL HAVE A JOB TO HIT ME!

TICH -- COME BACK!

HE'LL NEVER MAKE IT!



SWERVING AND DARTING AS IF HE WERE ON THE RUGGER FIELD, TICH RACED TOWARDS THE PILL-BOX.



TEN YARDS TO GO... FIVE! THEN A SPANDAU FROM THE PILL-BOX SWUNG ROUND. A FULL BURST RIPPED INTO THE GALLANT LITTLE WELSHMAN'S BODY.



TICH STAGGERED, FELL AND ROLLED OVER. HIS SENSES REELED AND A BLACK CLOUD PRESSED DOWN OVER HIS MIND. ABOVE HIS HEAD, THE GERMAN MACHINE-GUNS CHATTERED THEIR MOCKING MESSAGE OF DEATH.



USING EVERY OUNCE OF HIS RAPIDLY-EBBING STRENGTH, THE DYING WELSHMAN INCHED HIMSELF UP THE WALL OF THE STRONGPOINT.



THERE WAS A CRASHING EXPLOSION, AND THE GERMAN SPANDAUS FELL SUDDENLY SILENT. TICH HAD DONE IT— BUT IT WAS TOO LATE FOR HIM TO KNOW!



WITH THEIR FRONT BROKEN, THE GERMANS BROKE INTO DISORDERLY RETREAT. HERE AND THERE A FEW FANATIC NAZIS HELD OUT TILL THE LAST.



THE INFANTRY PRESSED ON, WITH RESISTANCE ENDED, THE BATTLE BECAME A MOPPING-UP OPERATION.

A LUGER —
THAT'LL FETCH
A FIVER FROM
SOME YANK!

LEAVE IT, SLIM
— LEAVE IT!



DAVE'S WARNING CAME TOO LATE. AS SLIM SEIZED THE BOOBY-TRAPPED PISTOL, THERE WAS A SMALL BUT VICIOUS EXPLOSION.

AAARGH!



SLIM—

IMAGINE A WIDE BOY
LIKE ME FALLING FOR
THAT ONE! SO-LONG,
DAVE!



AS DAVE STARED DOWN AT THE BODY OF HIS COMRADE, HE FELT A BLIND RAGE AT THE SENSELESS FUTILITY OF HIS DEATH!

THE ROTTEN SWINE! THEY WERE BEATEN—
WHAT GOOD HAS THIS DONE THEM?

EASY NOW,
LAD! WAR'S A
DIRTY GAME ANYWAY—
AND JERRY'S ALWAYS
A BAD LOSER!

THE BREAKOUT WAS COMPLETE. AS THE WESSEX PRESSED ON IN THE WAKE OF THE RETREATING ENEMY, THEY WERE PASSED BY A CONVOY OF AMERICAN TROOPS, RACING FOR ROME AND A DELIRIOUS WELCOME.

HEY, LIMEYS—
YOU'RE HEADIN'
THE WRONG WAY!

ROME—
HERE WE
COME!

WE'RE FIGHTING
A WAR— NOT ON A
SIGHT-SEEING
TOUR!

Roma

Fix Bayonets

THE BRITISH INFANTRY TRUDGED DOGGEDLY FORWARD—
TO THE NEXT FRONT LINE—AND THE ONE AFTER THAT!
SOME DAY, THEY KNEW, THERE WOULD BE A FINAL ONE.

ONE MORE RIVER...
ONE MORE RIVER
TO CROSS! ♪

HEARD THE
NEWS, SARGE?
WE'RE GOING
HOME!

COURSE WE ARE!
RIGHT UP THROUGH
ITALY—AND WE'RE
GOING TO FIGHT
THE WHOLE
FLIPPIN' WAY!



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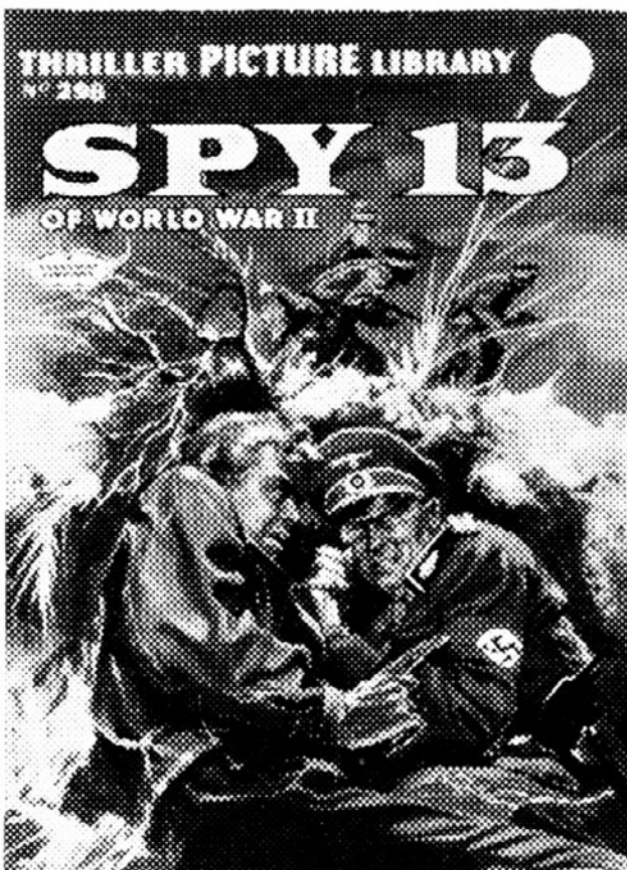
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